

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-9, 12 and 13 have been examined. Claims 1, 2-6, 8, 9 and 12-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,547,608 to Sato et al. ("Sato")

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 4-6, 8 and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Sato.

A. Claim 1

Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 1 recites that the resilient contact piece portion includes a beginning portion extending from a front end edge to a first curved portion, and an intermediate portion extending from the first curved portion to a convex portion. The beginning portion and the intermediate portion are provided substantially in parallel to the bottom wall at a predetermined clearance, so that the resilient contact piece portion extends substantially parallel to the bottom wall except for the first curved portion and the convex portion.

The Examiner refers to Figure 8D of Sato as disclosing the claimed features (pg. 2 of Office Action). Specifically, the Examiner maintains that portion DD discloses the claimed intermediate portion. However, as set forth above, the claimed resilient contact piece portion has two portions, a beginning portion and the intermediate portion, that are parallel to the bottom

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wall (as shown in the non-limiting embodiments of Figures 1 and 2 of the present invention). Applicant submits that Sato fails to teach or suggest a beginning portion and an intermediate portion that both extend substantially in parallel to a bottom wall. Rather, in Figure 8D of Sato, the portion 3D (i.e., a beginning portion) is inclined with respect to the bottom wall 8D.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

B. Claims 4-6, 8 and 12-13

Since claims 4, 5, 8, 12 and 13 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Also, Applicant has canceled claim 6, without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, the rejection of such claim is now moot.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,761,597 to Shimizu ("Shimizu")

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Shimizu.

A. Claim 1

Claim 1 recites that the resilient contact piece portion includes a beginning portion extending from a front end edge to a first curved portion, and an intermediate portion extending from the first curved portion to a convex portion. The beginning portion and the intermediate portion are provided substantially in parallel to the bottom wall at a predetermined clearance, so that the resilient contact piece portion extends substantially parallel to the bottom wall except for the first curved portion and the convex portion.

Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the Shimizu reference. For example, Shimizu fails to teach or suggest a beginning portion and an intermediate portion that both extend substantially in parallel to a bottom wall. Rather, in Figure 2 (which the Examiner cites to in his rejection), the portion 14e (i.e., an intermediate portion) is inclined with respect to the bottom wall 2.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

B. Claim 9

Since claim 9 is dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

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III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Sato

The Examiner has rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato. However, since claim 7 is dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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